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X.—*Notes on a Journey from Jerusalem by Hebron, the Dead Sea, El Ghór, and Wádi 'Arabah to 'Akabah, and back by Petra; in April, 1838.* By the Count DE BERTOU.

JERUSALEM.—After having visited Jericho and the northern end of the Dead Sea; also the monastery of St. Sabas, the Mount of the Ascension, and other remarkable spots in and around the Holy City, we left it on the morning of the 28th March, 1838, and, following the usual road in a general S.S.W. direction, we reached Hebron in the evening; the distance being about 22 miles.

*April 1.*—During the last three days we were occupied in examining the ruins of the ancient town; in sketching the mosque in which the tombs of Sarah, of Abraham, and of Jacob, are said to be found; and in making a bargain with the Arabs of the Jáhili tribe,\* to conduct us by the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, through the valley of El Ghór and the Wádi 'Arabah to El 'Akabah, at the head of the Ælanitic Gulf, and back to Hebron, by Petra; this, after much talking and wrangling, they consented to do for 3600 piastres (36*l.*); and at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7 this morning we started, under the escort of the Sheikh 'Abdallah.

The road leads in a S. by E. direction, along the side of a hill about 300 feet high, between olive-groves and vineyards on either hand, but after a short distance cultivation disappears, and the country presents the aspect of complete sterility.

At 6 m. we find the vestiges of an ancient road near the Dhahra† el Zif, at the foot of which are some wells. At 9 m. are the ruins of a castle called by the Arabs Karmel; the superstructure is evidently of the middle ages, but the large and well-cut stones of the foundations would seem to belong to an earlier period. The ruins scattered around mark the site of a town, doubtless that of Carmelia. From this spot the road turns off in a S.S.W. direction, and we shortly came to a rapid descent of 20 minutes, which brought us to the wells of Karyatein (the two villages), near which we saw the encampment of our Arabs, with their black tents stretching over the plain: to the eastward are the Jebel el Zo'arah‡ and Jebel Esdúm, being the mountains which form the western boundary of the lake Asphaltites. Esdúm is the Bedowin name for salt, and synonymous‡ with the Arab Milh. All these mountains, we were told, are covered with salt; and our Sheikh, 'Abdallah, spoke of a large cave in them; but it would have lengthened our journey too much to visit it.

\* Called in the plural number the Jáhiliyín, i. e. Jáhili Arabs.

† This probably should be spelt Zoweirah, and has no relation to the Zoar (So'ar) of Scripture.

‡ It is probable M. de Bertou misunderstood his Bedowin informers: Esdúm, or rather Sádúm itself, is evidently borrowed from Christians or Jews.

At Bír el Karyatêin are the remains of buildings, probably an Arab village; 2 miles farther we reached the camp of our Bedowin friends, and were hospitably received by the great Sheikh Músa Abú Dahúk, chief of all the Bedowins of the mountains of 'Abraham the beloved;' his people, divided into three encampments, live happily under his laws. In summer, they told me, each camp seeks out fresh pasturage for its flocks and herds, which forcibly recalled to my mind that Esau and Jacob separated from each other for the same purpose; at every step in this country one finds a striking resemblance between the account given in the Bible of the patriarchs of old and the manners and customs of its present inhabitants—nothing has changed.

*April 2.*—After a fresh attempt on the part of the Sheikh Músa to get more money from us, we started at noon, and, pursuing a general S.S.E. direction over an undulating plain, with the grass dried up for want of water, we crossed the three Wádís of El Lobar, El Hadeíbí and Es Sayál, leaving on our right a small hill called Tel-el-'ard. At 8 miles we reached the ruins of Mask Es-sedid, where there are fragments of columns rudely sculptured; crossed the valley of Omm el Budún, and at the end of 10 miles had the first glimpse of the Dead Sea, at the outlet of a deep valley on our left. Descending rapidly over ground covered with salt, and occasionally flints, we passed the cave of Maghárat el 'Azírat, and shortly before 6 o'clock encamped in the midst of a country bearing the stamp of the most complete desolation. Nearly opposite to us, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea, a long, low, white peninsula projects some distance to the N.N.W.\*

*April 3.*—We continued our descent in a S.E. direction, over calcareous ground, following the dry bed of a torrent called Wádí Zo'arah. At 4 miles passed on the right, in the precipitous face of a hill, the square entrance of an excavated tomb, named Maghárat El Dábúrah (Deborah's Cave); our Arabs said it was the work of the Franks. At 8 miles we reached the ruined castle of Zo'arah; at the foot of which passes a torrent bearing the same name; tamarisks and acacias cover the ground, and there is a fine view of the mountains of Arabia in the distance. At 10 miles we reached the foot of the descent: here the waters of the Wádí Zo'arah spread out over a plain, called by the Arabs El Nafíleh, from the quantity of shrubs of that name with which it is covered.

From this point we changed our direction to S. by E., and tra-

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\* M. de Bertou's MS. is accompanied by a sketch of the Dead Sea, and the mountains on either side, taken from this spot; as also by a drawing of the channel of Wádí 'Arabah, taken 7 miles from its outlet into the valley of El Ghór; and a sketch of the Wádí Gharendel.—Ed.

velled parallel to, and within about 500 yards of, the Dead Sea on our left.

In the limestone hills on our right is a grotto named Magháraf Esdúm (Sádúm), whence gushes a salt stream; the Arabs say that the cave may be followed for some miles. The hills are covered with blocks of salt, 7 feet in length by 3 in depth.

At 15 miles we reached the southern end of the Dead Sea, entered Wádí el Ghór,\* which is from 2 to 3 miles wide, and travelled over a plain covered with salt, at the foot of salt-hills; these hills diminish in height to the southward, and form the foreground to higher ranges behind them; they are in every part furrowed by salt torrents, which flow in winter, and inundate the plain over which we were travelling, in a direction a little to the W. of S.

At 20 miles crossed Wádí el Fukret, coming from the hills to the W., and flowing, as well as numerous other streams, to the Dead Sea. We gradually left the salt-hills, and approached the hills to the E., crossing a marsh, in which the water was not quite so salt as before. At 22 m. we reached the chain of low hills, which since the morning had appeared to us the limit of El Ghór, and to close it up by uniting the mountains of salt to those of Arabia. These hills, which are from 60 to 70 feet in height, are of a whitish and very friable sandstone; they form the buttresses or outwork (contresorts) of the desert, which stretches to the S., and is known by the name of Wádí 'Arabah: they are channelled by numerous small streams, which fall into El Ghór, and eventually into the Dead Sea. A little further on we reached 'Ain el 'Arús (the fountain of the betrothed), a warm spring, of the temperature of 95° Fahr., while that of the air was 88°: the taste of the water was a little sulphureous. On looking back, the direction of El Ghór from this spot was N. 15° E. by compass. Here were some dwarf palms. Just before reaching the eastern hills, our guides turned suddenly to the right, and cried out "Wádí 'Arabah, Wádí 'Arabah," and we entered this celebrated valley, which at first had the appearance of the bed of a great river; and, if its slope were not visible towards the Dead Sea, one would exclaim on seeing it, "this is really the bed of the Jordan:" it is, however, the bed of a torrent which flows in an opposite direction, viz., from S. to N., and falls into El Ghór. At present here is no water; its breadth, which is from 250 to 300 yards, is filled with tamarisks, which the camels devoured eagerly; it extends in a S.S.W. direction, and is bounded by almost vertical banks of grey freestone, about 150 feet in height. We halted for the night at 3 miles from the entrance, and hid our camp as much as possible, in order to escape the lynx-eyes of

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\* Properly Ghaúr.

the Arabs of Kerek, who inhabit the eastern hills which command the Wádi.

*April 4.*—In attempting to describe the scenes which we had yesterday beheld, I feel the utter inadequacy of words to express my feelings. I had wandered through the Alps, the Pyrenees, and many other mountains: I had seen countries blasted by the curse of the Almighty, the plains of Moab and the land of Ammon, but had hitherto seen nothing to compare with the mountains of Zo'arah and of Esdúm. Here is desolation on the grandest scale, and beyond what the imagination of man could conceive: it must be seen—to describe it is impossible. In this striking and solemn waste, where nature is alike destitute of vegetation and inhabitants, man appears but an atom:—all around is enveloped in the silence of death—not a bird, not even an insect is seen! The regular step of our camels returned a dull sound, as if the earth were hollowed beneath their feet; the monotonous chant of the camel-driver accompanied at times the step of this inhabitant of the desert, but was suddenly stopped, as if he feared to awaken nature. Three Bedowins went before us to examine the road, for we have to fear meeting with Arabs who might be enemies of our tribe. The sun concealed itself by thick clouds, and seemed unwilling to shine upon the land cursed by the Almighty. We saw the traces of several wolves. Everything seemed to combine to make the landscape a scene awfully sublime.

We started at 7 this morning in a S.S.W. direction; the hills on the right are much more furrowed than those on the left. At 8 miles we got sight of the mountains of Nabí Hárún (the prophet Aaron) or Mount Hor, on the horizon, to the south-eastward, offering a picturesque outline. As we advanced, the Wádi became wider, and assumed the aspect of a desert; the hills on each side decreased in height, and the plain seemed to ascend.

At 9 miles the banks of the valley to the left disappeared, and on the right we perceived distant mountains in the S.W. At 10 miles we passed the opening of Wádi Afðel, which comes from the S.E., and shortly afterwards that of Wádi Koseib (Rush Valley) from the S.W. At 15 miles we halted for a couple of hours at 'Ain-el-Hafireh, a small spring of tolerable water for the desert; it is situated at the spot where the road from Hebron to Petra crosses the Wádi 'Arabah. When Moses says, "Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness, *by the way of the Red Sea*,"\* he certainly speaks of the Wádi 'Arabah;—no epithet can be more applicable—besides, it appears, on examining the configuration of the ground, that Moses had no other road to take in order to go from Mount Hor into the desert of Sinäi; he would be afraid to recross the mountains inhabited by his

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\* Deut. xi. 1. See also ch. i. 2, 40; Numb. xiv. 25, and xxi. 4.

enemies, and the people, carrying with them their flocks and herds, could not choose a better route; it is a smooth road, of vast width, on which even carriages might travel.

Continued our journey again for two hours, when we halted for the night; the outline of the eastern mountains is highly picturesque.

*April 5.*—Quitting our camp at 7 this morning, we travelled in a S.S.W. direction, through the valley, which is here about 1500 yards wide. At 3 miles passed on our left a small hill, resembling a truncated cone, called Dubbet-el-Boghlah (Mule's-tail), and shortly after we saw Nabí Músa, (the Prophet Moses,) at a great distance, bearing S.E. by S. At 5 miles we halted at 'Ain-el-Ghamar (El Kamar?) a spring of the temperature of 15° Cent. (59 Fahr.); both the smell and taste of the water were detestable; but, as we should get no other till the following evening, we were compelled to fill our water-skins. A rock near this spring, of a soft reddish freestone, 70 feet high, is covered with the names, or rather the marks, of the Arabs who pass by this road; we added ours to the number. A female gazelle crossed our path, which the Arabs stopped by imitating the cry of the male. The ground is covered with flint pebbles; all vegetation has disappeared, and the Wádi is gradually lost in the slightly undulating plain, which extends towards the mountains in the E.

*April 6.*—During the morning we passed on our right the Wádi Talh\* (Acacia Vale), which extends to the westward, and which the Arabs pointed out to us as being the road to Egypt; in fact it is the route which Burckhardt followed in 1812, when he went from Wádi Músa to Cairo. From the junction of the Wádi Talh, the Arabs give the name of 'Akabah (the Ascent) to the southern prolongation of the Wádi 'Arabah, so that this spot would seem to be the line which separates the waters flowing to the Dead Sea from those discharged into the Red Sea. Indeed it is impossible to mistake the two slopes; one to the north, the other to the south. Hitherto we had seen no insects, but now we met myriads of beetles; we also killed a snake with a flat-pointed head.

From this point we turned off S.S.E., the ground still covered with small black flints, and with large but withered roses of Jericho (*Anastatica Herichuntina*), named nokdah by the Arabs. Shortly before noon, about 2 miles on our left, we passed an encampment of the Bedowins, Ḥasan ibn Jád, min 'Arab el Howeītát, at a place called El Ká'; and at the same time we had, at a few paces on our right, the tomb of Sheikh Rejem Abú Dahíj, near which is also a hollow with water in it named Khatíb el Dhá'ah. We passed Wádi Shádhem on our left, and 2 miles beyond it halted at the

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\* Talh, the *Acacia gummifera*.

junction of the Wádí Gharendel (Karendel ?) with El 'Arabah, [?] while our Bedowins went to fetch water at the springs of Gharendel, about 4 miles distant.

At 5 P.M. continued our journey against the semúm (poisoned) wind, which brought with it a quantity of fine sand with which the plain is covered, and at 7 o'clock encamped for the night.

Continued our journey on the following day by the dry bed of a stream, bordered by tamarisks. At sunrise we had a magnificent view of the mountains of Hormah in the E. At 15 miles halted to get a supply of water at the spring of Ghadíyán, which is strongly impregnated with sulphur. At 3 m. beyond passed a spot named Rejem el hadid (the iron cast); the valley is spread out into a great plain covered with small gravel of porphyry and granite.

*April 8.*—At  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 9 this morning we got the first sight of the Red Sea. The mountains on either side, which bound the Ælanitic Gulf, have a very picturesque outline; the soil we passed over is furrowed by the dry beds of torrents and covered with tamarisks. We soon after perceived the palm-trees of the Oasis of 'Akabah, and at 11 o'clock pitched our tents in the court of the castle. The luxury of having fresh water in abundance, after having been obliged for eight days to drink water impregnated with brimstone, and exhaling an odour of rotten eggs, and for the last two days even to have occasionally wanted that, is not easily to be imagined by those who have not experienced it; and when we saw a sakká (water-carrier) come to water the ground both within and without our tents, we could not help exclaiming at the apparent waste of so precious a fluid.

*April 12.*—During a stay of four days at 'Akabah we employed ourselves in sketching the scenery, &c., and in making a journey to Kasr-el-Bedawí (desert castle), about 3 miles from 'Akabah, on the E. side of the gulf. We had intended to have continued our journey to Sináï, but, finding great difficulty in procuring a guide, &c., we determined to return by Wádí Músa. At noon we quitted the castle of 'Akabah, and, retracing our steps to 'Aïn Ghadhíyán, encamped there for the night. On the following day turned off in a N.N.E. direction, and came to Wádí Deleghah, whose waters flow towards the Red Sea; the ground here is covered with mallows. Passed the ruins of the castle of Ká' on our left, and halted for the night at the line separating the Wádís 'Akabah and 'Arabah, called by the Arabs El Saḥ (the roof), or the culminating point.

*April 14.*—After an hour's journey we reached the channel of the waters of Wádí Ma'áferah, which flow into El 'Arabah; the hills, which here extend E. and W., reach to the eastern mountains, and thus form the separation between the two basins of the

Dead Sea and the Ælanitic Gulf. The track now led among the offsets of the eastern mountains, and we shortly entered Wādī Abū Kasheibeh and continued along it to the eastward for 2 miles, when we resumed our direction to the N.N.E.; in this valley are almost trees of oleander (*Nerium oleander*), and abundance of partridges. The ascent became so steep that we dismounted from our camels, and continued our journey on foot, passing round the base of the peak known by the name of Mount Hor, and saw distinctly the ḳobbeh, or cupola, which covers the tomb of Aaron. Our road now led directly E., through the Wādī Hárún (Aaron's valley), which receives the waters of the Wādī Múṣā, and then turning N.E. for about 2 miles, we pitched our tents amidst the ruins of Petra.

During a stay of five days among these splendid remains, we occupied ourselves diligently in examining the sites, sketching the temples, and copying inscriptions, and we fully agree with all former travellers in the magnificence of this city of the dead, and can bear ample testimony to the accuracy of M. de Laborde's plates.

*April 19.*—Quitting Petra at 2 h. 30 m. P.M., we retraced our steps and halted in sight of Mount Hor, where we left our caravan, and, portfolio under the arm, put ourselves under the guidance of Abdallah, and set off to visit the tomb off Aaron.

Mount Hor is a mass of reddish sandstone which rises 1500 feet above the level on which it is placed; there is nothing worthy of the name of road by which to reach the summit; it was by climbing from rock to rock, and after an hour and a quarter of hard work, that we reached the Turbah of Hárún; we entered by the western door the ḳobbeh or dome which covers this ancient and venerable tomb, and found ourselves in a square chamber 9 yards long by 6 wide, having the roof supported by double arches which join in the middle and are supported by pillars: the first object which struck us on entering was a sarcophagus covered with drapery of painted cloth under which are some green rags: we thought at first that it was Aaron's tomb, but the Bedowins of the country, who had joined our party, said that it was only the tomb of his horse. An inscription in the ornamented Arabic or Kufic characters would doubtless tell in whose honour this tomb was erected, but as night was coming on I had not time to copy all of it:\* the Bedowins lighted a lamp, which is left there for visitors, and they conducted us to a small staircase at the N.W. angle of the chamber. We descended fourteen steps and

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\* Unfortunately, the name of the person who erected this monument is in the three last lines which I had not time to copy; but the form of the character sufficiently indicates that this monument is very ancient. Dr. Löwe thinks of the time of 'Omar.

found ourselves in a narrow dark corridor, about 1 yard wide by 2 long, at the end of which we saw the tomb of the brother of the great law-giver. To describe the various sensations that pressed upon me at this moment, would be impossible; I will therefore confine myself to a brief description of what we saw: the mausoleum has the form of a quarter of a sphere placed on a pedestal; fragments of ornaments in wood, a small stone column, and two copper railings, which formerly surrounded the tomb, and are now hung up to the roof, are the only objects to be seen in this cave. The Arabs, who are always in expectation of finding treasure, have searched the stonework; and broken stones, and even some torn out at the base of the tomb, bear witness to the cupidity of this savage people.

We observed with astonishment that the Bedowins paid more respect to the tomb of the horse than to that of the prophet himself. We returned to the upper chamber, where several capitals and bases of small Corinthian columns are lying about. One shaft of a large column still stands upright behind the sarcophagus of the *faras* (horse), and others similar are visible in the external wall. Who could be the people to erect here a monument adorned with Corinthian columns? The Jews under the protection of the Romans or the Nabatheans?

Two large caldrons are left in the *ḵobbēh* for the use of the faithful who come hither to sacrifice to the prophet; one is destined for the offerings of sheep and goats, the other for that of camels; several *ex voto* offerings are suspended to the roof or to the columns of the upper chamber, such as shreds of cloth, ostrich eggs, glass beads, &c. After having seen everything well, M. Montfort, my travelling companion, and I, set to work to make drawings of both the interior and exterior of the tomb; nor did we leave the summit of Mount Hor till half an hour after sunset, and it was not without difficulty that we regained our tent. We had the satisfaction of possessing our two drawings of the tomb: but we are to start to-morrow morning before daylight, as our Bedowins have a dreadful fear of the *Hawēitāt*—they are no longer in *keif*.\*

*April 20.*—Quitting our camp at Nakbel Robá', at the western entrance of Wádi Hárún, we set out in a N.N.W. direction, passing by the Wádi-el-Robá' into the Wádi el Abyadh (white valley), and thus in a slanting direction across Wádi 'Arabah towards Hebron and Gaza. El 'Arabah is here very wide, and the ground covered with flints. About sunset we halted to fill our water-skins at the springs of El Weibeh, or El Lúbiyeh,†

\* "Good-humour."

† As lúbiyah (French bean) is a Persian or Hindí word, it is not likely that it would form part of a Bedowin name, such being usually genuine Arabic.—F. S.

which form a little oasis of palm-trees and reeds, and half an hour beyond it we encamped for the night, as our Jáhílín feared to stop at the well on account of the tribes in the neighbourhood with whom they are on bad terms.

*April 21.*—Continuing in a nearly N. direction we crossed not less than ten nameless Wádís, at intervals of as many miles, their dry beds all leading to the equally dry channel of El 'Arabah, about 3 miles on our right; these small valleys abound in thorny acacias. A little beyond, a low range of hills named Jebel el kofaïkifeh intervenes between El 'Arabah and our road, which, following their western foot, inclined to the N.N.W. for a few miles as far as Wádí Koteïf, after passing which we left about 3 miles on our left an isolated small hill named by our guides Kádeseh or El Madárah; the name in this locality is remarkable—may it not be the Kadesh of the Scriptures? The roads to Gaza and Hebron separate here; following the latter, we soon after reached the Wádí Fukreh, which leads out of Jebel Yamen (Right-hand Mountain); this range, which had bounded our northern horizon since the morning, is the beginning of the mountains of Judea, which we now enter by a deep defile, the mural hills on either side rising from 150 to 200 feet; on reaching the end of the valley or gorge, we commence a steep ascent up the mountains, which are about 1000 feet high, winding by a very rough track through a wild and rocky defile, till at the summit we come out again upon an apparent desert. I had hoped and expected a better country: a little beyond this we found traces of vegetation, and halted for the night at the spring called 'Aïn Yamen.

*April 22.*—Our road this day crossed wide sandy plains, with bushes scattered here and there. After passing the Wádí Mezlikah, we traverse some low eminences and pass a river named Kurnúb on the left; here is a fountain and two fragments of buildings, which the Bedowins say was the work of the Christians. Farther on we passed the Wádí Abú Ṭarfá (Father Tamarisk), a small hill called Kubbet el Baul, the ruins of a town, and followed the course of the Wádí Shehábí in a westerly direction as far as a small ruined fort, where we turned due N. This was the route travelled by the pilgrims from Hebron to Ma'an on their way to Mecca at the time that Moḥammed 'Alí forbade them the route by 'Akabah.

At sunset we reached our former encampment at Bír Karyateïn, where our Arabs were joyfully received by their own tribe of Jáhílín, but who had now left the valley and were encamped on the neighbouring hills. The Sheikh Múṣa came forward to give us the Arabic salutation of welcome, Má rabá el Ḥamdu-l'llah! and it was not without a feeling of much satisfaction and pleasure that we saw our tent again pitched in the midst of a

friendly people after an absence of four weeks, and felt grateful for our safe return from a journey of much fatigue and anxiety, not unattended with danger, and in which we had the gratification of knowing that we were the first Europeans who in modern times had traversed the whole extent of the Wádi, from the Dead Sea to 'Akabah, and have proved that, in the present state of things, the river Jordan never could have flowed into the Ælanitic Gulf. On the following day we returned to Hebron.

[It is due to M. de Bertou to state that the above account has been very much abridged from his detailed narrative, in which he gives a very minute itinerary, with compass-bearings nearly every quarter of an hour. These have been made use of in laying down his route in the accompanying map. M. de Bertou also gives some barometric, and several thermometric observations, in order to determine the elevation by the temperature of boiling water; but, as he himself states that his instruments were out of order, it is thought better to omit the results. M. de Bertou's original MS. is preserved in the library for reference.]

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XI.—*Extract from a Notice on the Site of Ancient Tyre.* By the  
COUNT J. DE BERTOU.

*Beïrût, 21st November, 1838.*

IN addition to the account of my journey from Jerusalem to 'Akabah, I have now the pleasure to present to the Geographical Society of London the result of my researches concerning the site of ancient Tyre. My inquiries were based upon a series of questions proposed to me by M. Poulain de Bossay, of the Geographical Society of Paris,\* and I hope some light may be thrown by them on the archæological and historical discussion raised in the learned world on the subject of the ancient metropolis of Phœnicia.

Perfectly aware of the difficulty which exists in making ancient topographical researches without the assistance of an exact representation of the ground, I hoped to do a useful thing in surveying and measuring, with great exactness, the contours of the peninsula upon which the village of Sûr is now built, accompanying this plan, made on a large scale, with a second, indicating both the respective positions and distances of the different localities which may have given rise to discussion.

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\* Bulletin de la Société de Géographie. Janvier, 1838, p. 47.